

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please insert the subheading before the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 4, as follows:

--BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION--.

Please insert the subheading before the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 13, as follows:

--SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--.

Please amend the paragraphs beginning at page 2, line 13 and extending through page 3, line 7, as follows:

~~The object of the present~~ This invention is ~~thus to provide~~ a tube plate for tube bundles for chemical reactors, which eliminates the above-described disadvantages. The tube plate ~~A further object of the present invention is to provide a tube plate for tube bundles for chemical reactors, which can be produced quickly and economically; and A further object of the present invention is to provide a tube plate for tube bundles for chemical reactors, which is safe and reliable when it is installed.~~

~~These objects and others according to the invention are achieved by a tube plate for tube bundles for chemical reactors, characterised in that it comprises a plurality of components, with a shape which is complementary to one another, in order to form a complete plate, wherein the said components are produced separately, and are connected to one another subsequently by means of mechanical joints, in order to form the said tube plate.~~

--In one aspect, the present invention relates to a tube plate adapted to hold a bundle of tubes, the tube plate comprising a first perforated component having a first facing edge thereof; a second perforated component having a second facing edge thereof, the facing edges having mating complementary surfaces that enable the first and second perforated components to be joined so as to form a smooth interface therebetween; and a plurality of pin fasteners extending through the complementary surfaces of the first and second perforated components to thereby form a connection between the first and second perforated components.

In another aspect, the invention relates to a tube plate for holding a plurality of tubes, the tube plate comprising first and second semi-circular components joined together mechanically along a smooth interface defined by a pair of facing straight edges, respectively, of the first and second semi-circular components, each of the semi-circular components having a plurality of perforations for receiving individual ones of the tubes.

B₁
(cont)

In still another aspect, the invention relates to a tube plate for holding a plurality of tubes, the tube plate comprising first and second semi-circular components joined together mechanically along a pair of facing straight edges, respectively, of the first and second semi-circular components, each of the semi-circular components having a plurality of perforations for receiving individual ones of the tubes; the first semi-circular component provided with a projection along one of the pair of facing straight edges and the second semi-circular component provided with a cavity along the other of said pair of

facing straight edges, the projection received within the cavity so as to form a smooth connecting interface between the first and second semi-circular components.--

By
(initial)

Please amend the paragraphs beginning at page 3, line 13 and extending through page 4, line 3, as follows:

The characteristics and advantages of the tube plate for tube bundles for chemical reactors, according to the present invention, will become more apparent from the following description of a typical embodiment, provided by way of non-limited example, with reference to the attached schematic drawings ~~in which:~~ described below.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

—f Figure 1 represents in plan view a tube plate for tube bundles for chemical reactors, according to the present invention; and

—f Figure 2 represents, partially in cross-section, a detail of the system for connection between components of the tube plate in the preceding figure, according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

With particular reference to ~~the aforementioned figures~~ Figures 1 and 2, the tube plate for tube bundles with large sizes, according to the present invention, is indicated globally by the reference number 10.

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(amended)

In the exemplary embodiment illustrated ~~by way of example in the attached~~
figures, the tube plate 10 has two components, 11 and 12, with a substantially semi-
circular shape, which have previously been machined.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 14, as follows:

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As described briefly hereinafter, the components of the tube plate, the number of
which depends on the dimensions and the structural requirements, are processed until
they are completed, and are then connected mechanically. In the example illustrated ~~in~~
~~the attached figures~~, the semi-circular components 11 and 12 are joined to one another by
means of a plurality of pins 15.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 24, as follows:

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In fact, the component 11 has a projection 13 which is inserted in a corresponding
cavity 14 in the component 12 to thereby form a smooth connecting interface between the
components as seen in Figure 2.
